(b) the reasons that ATR flights are being operated from Kolkata instead of Guwahati; and

(c) whether Government propose to shift the ATR Flight Headquarters from Kolkata to Guwahati and if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Alliance Air has inducted four ATR-42-320 aircraft on dry lease for a period of five years for deployment exclusively in the North East to improve intra regional connectivity. Effective 28.07.2004, Alliance Air has based one ATR aircraft at Guwahati as per the requirements in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the North East Council and Alliance Air.

Kolkata is the main technical base for the ATR aircraft in view of existence of maintenance and other infrastructure. The Kolkata base is also approved by the Director General of Civil Aviation. The positioning of all four ATR aircraft of Alliance Air at Guwahati would not be able to adequately serve the growing requirements of linking North Eastern stations with Kolkata.

Problems relating to upgradation of Amritsar Airport

599. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that following the upgradation of Amritsar Airport, passengers are facing problems due to (i) limited holding area for arriving passengers (ii) frequent breaking down of baggage belt (iii) congestion of baggage claim area and (iv) non-air-conditioning of the departure and check area;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the ongoing and major contract works have also come to a standstill after Government's decision in Feb. 2005 to revive the proposed Terminal Building; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to complete all the works including Arrival/Departure Halls and cargo building units to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) There had been some constraints for some time due to construction activities of new international terminal building at Amritsar Airport. However, after commissioning of a new arrival area having 3000 sqm of area and two conveyors of 60 meters length each in

September, 2005 situation has improved considerably. After completion/ commissioning of the new international terminal building module-I (totally air conditioned) and cargo complex by the end of December, 2005, there will be further improvement in the services. However, in view of the fast growing traffic, some modifications have been suggested in ongoing works so as to match with the second module of international terminal building.

Decongestion of airports

600. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that aircraft movements have grown rapidly in the country;

(b) if so, the percentage of growth with details during the last three years;

(c) whether it is a fact that flights are being delayed for take off and landing due to this increase in air traffic; and

(d) the steps taken to decongest airports so as to avoid delay of aircrafts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The compound growth rate of aircraft movement was 9.9%, 14.4% and 11.9% for the year 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 respectively.

(c) Yes, Sir. During peak hours and due to weather related problems etc. sometimes delays do take place.

(d) Airports Authority of India (AAI) gives Incentives to airlines to operate and park their aircraft at other than notified international airports.

AAI has also initiated action to provide additional parking stands, expansion/upgradation of terminal buildings, runways, taxiways at many airports. These steps would help decongest the airports facing traffic congestion.

New Airport at Arunachal Pradesh

†601. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up an airport in Arunachal Pradesh;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.